

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace paragraph [0001] with the following amended paragraph:

[0001] The invention relates to a method of protecting a local area of a component from the effects of thermochemical or mechanical processes carried out on the surface of component ~~according to the claim 1~~.

Please replace paragraph [0043] with the following amended paragraph:

[0043] In a further embodiment of the current invention, for the cases where there is still masking material 5 or filler material in the cooling holes 4, a water jet 9 (as shown in Fig. 3g) or an ultrasonic cleaning treatment after the burnout of the polymer could be used to remove any residual masking material which is in the cooling holes 4. This step can be done manually, or by locating the cooling holes 4 using a three dimensional vision system which directs a ~~CNC~~ computer numerically controlled machine using the same program to drill the cooling holes 4 in the first place.